A Year and a Life Well Concluded.

A brief ESSAY,

On the

GOOD THINGS

Wherein

The LAST WORKS

Of a CHRISTIAN, may be, and ſhould be,

His BEST WORKS.

A SERMON Preached on the LAST DAY of the Year, 1719.

Finis Coronat Opus.

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A

YEAR & a LIFE,

Well Concluded.

BOSTON-LECTURE, 31d. Xm. 1719.

REV. II. 19.

I know thy Works, and the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.

ON the FIRST Day of *this Year* I had an Opportunity to ſtand before the Lord in this Place of the Publick Exhortations, and ſet before you the Maxims and Methods of *Piety*, proper to *Begin* the Year; The *Firſt Things* to be done *Every Year*, and the *Good Things* to be continued *all the Year*. By a ſort of *Epanalepſis* in Providence, it falls unto me, now to Stand in this Place again, on the LAST Day of the Year. And I know not how better to *Conclude the Year*, than with an Eſſay upon thoſe Things, which every Servant of

of GOD ſhould *Conclude his Life* withal; and thoſe Things, which thoſe of us, that are Evidently in their **Laſt Days**, and are come to the *Concluſion of their Life*, have ſingular cauſe to think upon.

I have Read a TEXT, that will ſuit my Deſign incomparably.

HOW Happy was the Paſtor of the Church at *Thyatira*; A Man, who was it ſeems an *Angel* of a Man; the *Angel* of the Church there; That He could receive this Commendation from our Lord now aſcended unto His *Excellent Glory* in the Heavens; That his *Laſt Works* were more than his *Firſt*! *Thyatira* now has no Chriſtian Church in it; Scarce one Chriſtian Soul in it. The *Turks* indeed have *Eight Moſchs* in the Town. *Mahomet* has more Followers than our SAVIOUR there. But once there was an admirable Aſſembly of Chriſtians in the City; under the conduct of a *Paſtor*, who was a *Man after the Heart of GOD*.

OUR SAVIOUR from the *Throne of His Glory* ſends them a *Letter*, wherein He encourages them, with the mention of ſeveral commendable Things in them, which He took a gracious, and a grateful notice of. *My Brethren*; Our SAVIOUR takes Notice of what we *are*; takes Notice of what we *do*; will be pleas'd with it, if we *are*, and if we *do*, what ſhall be commendable.

BUT there is one very Commendable Thing, which is now to be inſiſted on; *The Laſt Works of a Chriſtian more than his Firſt.*

More! It implies, both *more* for *Number*, and *more* in *Value.* It implies, An Improvement in *Piety*; in all that is Good.

MY DOCTRINE, will claim a Room among the *Right Thoughts of the Righteous*, and be worthy to be *had in Everlasting Remembrance* with you.

HAPPY, Happy, is that Christian whose LAST WORKS are his BEST WORKS.

A Christian must always abounds in *Good Works*; But be more abundantly Sollicitous, That his *Last Works*, may be his *Best Works.*

WE will Enquire, First; Who is the *Happy Christian*, of whom it may be said, *His Last Works are his Best Works?*

THE Lovely Descripiton of such a Christian is now to be set before you. Oh! Look upon it, and say, *Let my Last End be like his!*

First; THE *Last Works* of a Christian are his *Best Works*, when the Works of the Divine Grace in him, are *growing to the Last*, and are found *well grown at the Last.* Of a True Christian it may be said, as in Phil. 1. 6. *GOD hath begun a Good Work in you.* A Work it is, by which he is inclined and enabled for Living to GOD. When this *Good Work* is on the growing Hand, and a Christian in his *Last Days* has this *Good Work* more conspicuous in him; then his *Last Works* are his *Best Works.* All the *Graces* which Rectify and Purify and Beautify a Regenerate Mind, are so many *Works* of GOD upon a Christian; These *Works* of GOD, may be called *Our Works* also; Because tho' we are not

not the *Workers of them*, yet we are the *Subjects* of them. Thoſe precious *Works* of GOD, which make a Chriſtian to *Acknowledge* GOD in all his ways, and *Reſemble* his admirable SAVIOUR; The e *Works* have more of a *weakneſs* and a *dimneſs* on them, in the more *Early Days* of a Chriſtian. The *Works* have much *lacking in them.* He is perhaps for a long while no other than a *Feeble Chriſtian.* But let theſe *Works* appear brigher on a Chriſtian in his *Latter Days*, Then ſhall it be ſaid, That his *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works.* There are Chriſtians of that Claſs, which is called; Rom. 15. 1. *The Strong.* The Chriſtian which gets up into that Claſs in his *Latter Days*; the Chriſtian which arrives to a noble *Strength* in Chriſtianity; the Chriſtian who the *longer* he lives, the *wiſer* and the *better* he grows; This is the Chriſtian to whom our pleaſed SAVIOUR ſays, *I know thy works, the Laſt are more than the Firſt.*

Firſt; LET us Examine the *Knowledge* of the Chriſtian, whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works.* He is one, who in his *Latter Days*, has a more Full, Experimental, and Efficacious *Knowledge* of the Goſpel, than he had in his *Former Days.* We read of ſuch a Thing, 2 Per. III. 18. as, *Growing in the Grace, & the Knowledge of our Lord & Saviour JESUS CHRIST.* There is a Chriſtian, who in his *Latter Days*, gains mightily in the *Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST*, and of the *Grace* wherewith we are favoured of GOD in

Him. When a Decay of *Bodily Sight* perhaps is begun upon him, and the *Stars* are ſo *darkened* that the *Sky* appears *Cloudy* to him, even *after the Rain*, yet now he becomes more ſharp-ſighted in the *Great Myſtery of Godlineſs*. Once he was *Unſkilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs*, and uſed *Milk*, and was a *Babe*: Now he can digeſt the *Strong Meat*, which they that are *of a full Age* have belonging to them. In his *Latter Days* he not only Underſtands the *Truths* which are *Eſſential* to the *Foundation of the Chriſtian Religion*, but he is better ſtudied in the whole *Body of Divinity*, and becomes *mighty in the Scripture*. Yea, In his *Latter Days*, he not only *Knows* the *Truths* of GOD, but he alſo *Feels* them. The *Truths* of GOD make thoſe *Impreſſions* upon him, which furniſh him with ſuch a *Witneſs within*, that no *Diſputation* or *Perſecution* can ever cauſe him to part with them. The *Truths* of GOD have had ſuch a *Sanctifying Force* upon him, that the *Gates of Hell cannot prevail* againſt his Belief of them. He not only *Feels* the *Truths* of GOD, but he *Lives* them too. He does not *hold the Truths* of GOD *in unrighteouſneſs*; but he *walks* in them; he *chuſes the way* of them. Such is his *Walk*, as to proclaim that the *Truths* of GOD have a matchleſs power over him. In his *Latter Days*, and a little before he leaves *this World*, he *Realizes* the *Inviſible World* more than formerly. *Inviſibles* become to him the *greateſt Realities*, now he is cloſing his Eyes upon

upon Earthly *Vanities*. He has more of the *Confidence of Things hoped for*, more of the *Evidence of Things not ſeen*. 'Tis as *Real* to him that there is a GOD, who looks upon him, as if he had GOD in the Lumunous *Cloud* which was of old called, *The Glory of the Lord*, actually before his Eyes. 'Tis as *Real* to him, That we have a REDEEMER Above, as if he did with his Eyes actually ſee the *Son of Man* exerciſing his *Prieſthood* in the *Holy of Holies*, as His Beloved *John* did when *he fell dead at His feet*. It is as *Real* to him, That there ſhall be a Day of JUDGMENT, as if like *Daniel*, he actually ſaw the *Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven*: and heard the Trumpet, and heard the Sentence. Ah! Chriſtian; Art thou coming to this in thy *Latter Days*, that the *Light* of GOD in thy Mind *Shines more & more towards the perfect Day?* That thou art very much more *Enlightened*, as the *Days of Darkneſs* are nigh unto thee? It muſt be ſo, that thy *Laſt Works* may be thy *Beſt Works*.

Secondly. WHAT is the *Repentance* in the Chriſtian, whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works?* Not a little *Sorrow* for Sin, and *Hatred* of it. No, but a *Corinthian Repentance*; 2Cor. VII. 11. *Sorrowing after a godly ſort; with what Carefulneſs? Yea, what Indignation? Yea, what Fear? Yea, what vehement Deſire? Yea, what Zeal? Yea, what Revenge?* A *Repentance*, that will Humbly, Kindly, Thankfully Entertain a *Reproof*. A *Repentance*, that will take

take a ſort of a ſecret Pleaſure in it, when GOD employs *Affictive Methods*, and thoſe of *Reproaches* in particular, to diſcover and embitter Sin unto a Man. A *Repentance* which will reckon *Sin* more *Bitter than Death*, and eſteem the *Death of Sin*, a Favour of GOD that ſhall be *Better than Life*. Chriſtian, This *Repentance* muſt be found in thy *Laſt Works*; 'Twill not be *Repented of*.

Thirldly; WHAT is the *Faith* of CHRIST, in the Chriſtian, whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works?* Not ſuch a *Grain of Muſtard Seed*, that it ſhall be ſaid unto him, *O Thou of Little Faith*. No, but a *Faith* like that of *Abraham*; Rom. IV. 20. *Strong in Faith, giving Glory to GOD*. A *Faith* which in every ſtep of a Mans whole courſe, does converſe with a Glorious CHRIST, as the *Prince of Life*: A *Faith* which finds *that* in a Glorious CHRIST that will make up the want of all *Creatures*; A *Faith* willing to *Dye* for a CHRIST, as well as *Live* to Him; and forever Glad of all *Conformity* to that Glorious LORD, yea, tho' it be in the moſt Emptying and Abaſing *Humiliations*. Chriſtian, Thy *Laſt Works* muſt have ſuch a *Faith* in them.

Fourthly; WHAT is the *Love* of GOD, in the Chriſtian whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works?* Verily, As his *Death* is coming on, he comes to that; Cant. VIII. 6. *A Love Strong as Death*. A *Love* that ſees nothing but what is Lovely in the Infinite GOD; a GOD worthy of Infinite Love; yea, nothing worthy to be Loved

but GOD, & what is to be Loved on the Account of GOD: A *Love* that makes a Man place all his Felicity in the Fruition of the GOD whom He Loves; and preſs after this with moſt vehement Anhelations, *That GOD ſhall become All in All unto him*: A *Love* that fills a Man with *Sacrifices*, and renders him willing to *Sacrifice* all his Enjoyments to GOD; and have his *own will* entirely Aboliſhed and Extinguiſhed, and Swallowed up with the *Will of GOD*. Chriſtian, Thy *Laſt Works* muſt have ſuch a Love in them.

Fifthly, WHAT is the *Charity* to his *Neighbour*, in the Chriſtian whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works?* Truly like the Old Apoſtle *John*, as he grows Old, his Heart is more ſet upon the point of, *Brotherly Love*. He is more concerned, that he may not fail in any Duty of a *Brother* to a *Neighbour*. As he draws towards the period of his Life, he more ſenſibly takes in the meaning of that Great Word; 1 Joh. III. 16. *We ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren*. He has a *Charity*, ſtu lious always to *do as he would be done unto*: A *Charity* which delights as heartily in the *Proſperity* of others, as if it were his own: A *Charity*, which can heartily *wiſh* well, heartily *do* well, even to *Perſonal Enemies*, and *Overcome Evil with Good*. Chriſtian, Thy *Laſt Works* muſt have this *Charity* Embelliſhing of them. O my Brethren, Theſe, Theſe muſt be the *Attainments*; Theſe the *Ornaments* of your *Latter Days*. Then will your Glorified SAVIOUR

ſay,

ſay, *I know my works in thee; the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.*

Secondly. THE *Laſt Works* of a Chriſtian are his *Beſt Works*, when in his *Laſt Days*, he becomes more *Fruitful* in all *Good Works*. Our *Devotions* towards GOD; theſe are to multiply in our *Latter Days*. We are to be more frequent in them, and more fervent in them: We are to get on towards the *Davidical* ſtroke; Pſal. CXIX. 164. *Seven times a day do I praiſe thee.* Our *Kindneſſes* towards *Men*; theſe are to multiply in our *Latter Days*. The doing of *Good Offices* muſt grow more common with us; The Showers of our *Alms* muſt grow more plentiful. It was urged, 1 Theſ. IV. 9, 10. *Ye are taught of GOD to love one another; But increaſe more & more.* Our *Latter Days* are to be our moſt *Uſeful Days*. Our SAVIOUR ſays unto the Miniſter of *Thyatira, I know thy Service, and thy Works; and the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.* The Man that has all his Days been a *Serviceable Man*, Let him ſtill be more *Serviceable* if he can in his *Latter Days*. *Now* let us be more Inquiſitive, what our *Talents* are; *Now* more *Induſtrious* in well applying of them; *Now*, that we are going to give up our Account. When we are juſt *Going out* of the World, and moſt willing to *leave* the World, then let us *Do moſt Good* in the World. When we are *weary of the World*, thro' the Bad and Baſe Uſages, we find in it, then let us be leaſt *weary* of *well-doing*, moſt willing to *do Good* in the World

World. It is mentioned as the Priviledge of ſome; Pſal. XCII.14. *They ſhall ſtill bring forth Fruit in Old Age.* Oh! Let us bring forth *Fruit*, even in the *Winter* of our Life. Yea, When the Days of *Withering* are come upon us, then let us *bring forth* moſt of that *Fruit*, wherewith our *Heavenly Father ſhall be Glorified.* Now the *Laſt Works* are more than the *Firſt.*

Thirdly. THE *Laſt Works* of a Chriſtian are his *Beſt Works*, when towards the *End of his Time*, he is moſt conſciencious of *Redeeming his Time.* It is propoſed, Eph. V. 15,16. *Walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe; Redeeming the Time, becauſe the Days are Evil.* The *Beſt Works* are thoſe, wherein *Time* is moſt *Redeemed* for the *Beſt* of *Purpoſes*: for the *Doing* of Good, and for the *Getting* of Good. In *Redeeming* of *Time*, we *walk circumſpectly*; and as the Word may ſignify, we walk up to the *Top*, the *Height* of *Wiſdom.* As when our *Days* are *Evil*, ſo when our *Days* are *Ending*, and we have but a *Few* left of our *Few and Evil Days*, now more than ever, and with a Doubling of our Diligence is our *Time* to be *Redeemed.* In our *Latter Days* we ſhould grow more afraid of throwing away ſo much as *one Day* impertinently; *Begrutch* all the *Time* that ſhall be ſpent unprofitably. We expect the *Angel* of Death to approach, and to *Swear by Him who liveth forever & ever*, That we ſhall have *Time no longer.* 'Tis now time for us to become very skilful, and very careful, and very watch-

ful, for ſo ſpending the few remaining Moments of our *Time*, that we may have *Praiſe of* GOD. That our *Laſt Works* may be our *Beſt Works*, we muſt be ſtudious to diſtinguiſh our *Latter Days*, with doing *much Work in a little Time.* Often, Often ſhould we now recollect ourſelves; *Am I now employ'd as* GOD *would have me to be: and employ'd as a Man that has but a few Days to Live ſhould be?* Our *Laſt Works* will not be our *Beſt Works*, if our *Laſt Days* be not laid out unto the Beſt Advantage. Oh! Be afraid of *Dead Works*, or lying as Unactive as if we were Dead, when we are juſt *going to the Dead.*

Fourthly. THE *Laſt Works* of a Chriſtian are his *Beſt Works*, when towards the *End* of his *Time*, he more patiently encounters the *Sufferings of this preſent Time.* Our *Latter Time* will probably be on many Accounts a *Suffering Time.* We are in *Suffering work* to finiſh what we have to do for GOD. So *Patience* is to have its *Perfect work*; to *Crown* all our *Work.* Our Lord ſaid, *I know thy Patience, and thy Works; the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.* Our *Bearing* of *Evil Things* with *Patience*, this is no ſmall Article of our *Good Works.* In our *Laſt Works* we muſt expreſs more of *Patience* than in our former Days. Then will our *Laſt Works* be our *Beſt Works.* We have been a long while in the *School* of our Heavenly Inſtructor. In our *Latter Days* our *Proficiency* at the *School* ſhould appear *unto all Men.* Our *Proficiency* muſt appear

in

in our *Patience* under the *Trials*, which in our *Latter Days* we ſhall more than ever find the *Things appointed for us*. We read; Prov. XXIV. 10. *If thou faint in the Day of Adverſity, thy Strength is ſmall.* 'Twill be a diſgrace to us, if after we have ſo long made a Profeſſion of being the Followers of a SAVIOUR who dyed on the Croſs, our *Strength* to bear the *Croſs*, be but *Small*. In our *Latter Days*, we muſt be *Strong* to bear *Afflictions* from the Hand of GOD. Whatever Troubles are ordered for us, we muſt now with a profound Submiſſion ſay, *The Cup that my Father gives me, ſhall not I drink it?* With a Lowly, Quiet, Reſigning Soul, now entertain the Sovereign Will of GOD, in the darkeſt of all His Diſpenſations. In our *Latter Days* we muſt be *Strong* to bear *Oppreſſions* from the Hand of *Man*. Under never ſo vile *Abuſes*, we ſhould be above too hard *Reſentments*. When *Reviled*, we ſhould now be as the *Sheep* is before the *Shearers*, Eaſy, Silent, Undiſturbed. We ſhould have a *Calm* within, under *Storms* of Obloquies from *Abroad*: and thoughtful for nothing but this; *What is the Errand that GOD ſends theſe Things upon?* Finally; We are to *Dye* quickly. We are now to be *Dead* unto all Things here below. Such muſt be our *Death*, as to ſay concerning all that *bereaves* us, all that *leſſons* us, all that lays us in the Duſt; *None of theſe Things move me!* Here is that Happy Chriſtian, whoſe *Laſt Works* are his *Beſt Works*.

AND now, Shall we Enquire Secondly;

What is there to declare him an *Happy Christian*, whose *Last Works* are his *Best Works?* No, There seems little Need of answering an *Enquiry*, where no one can make any *Question*. After we have seen our SAVIOUR, from His *Glorious High Throne*, signifying the Satisfaction which He took in the Angelical Man, whose *Last Works* were *more than the First*, certainly none will question, whether this be an *Happiness*. Oh! What an unspeakable *Happiness*, to be one acceptable and amiable in the Eyes of our Holy SAVIOUR!

¶ THERE is nothing in the way, to divert the passing of my Discourse into an EXHORTATION, and an EXCITATION, which is now to be address'd, especially unto those, who have passed thro' their more *Early Days*, and have the Shadows of their *Latter Days* advancing upon them. O Let *such*, yea, and *all* of us, make sure of this, That our *Last Works* may be our *Best Works*.

First; O You that are yet *in your Sins*; yet Unconverted, and not Reconciled unto GOD; Unto *you* must that awful word be spoken; You never did any *Good Works* at all. Concerning them who thus lye *Dead in their Sins*, we are told, Psal. XIV. 3. *There is none that doth Good, no not One.* The Word of GOD unto you, is; Oh! Turn to GOD immediately. Be Concern'd, Be Earnest, Be Restless, that you may have such a *Work* of GOD upon you, as may render you His *Workmanship created*

created for Good Works. Oh! Lamentable caſe! If you do no *Good Works* at all until your *Latter Days.* And yet, *Old Sinners,* Come now into the *Vineyard;* —*Better late than Never.*

BUT then, Secondly; Whatever *Good Works* any of us have done in our *Former Days,* yet, Oh! Let there be *more* in our *Latter Days.* Yea, were it ſo, that any have been all their Days, and even from their Childhood, *abounding in the Works of the Lord:* Were it ſo, that any have been ſo Sagacious for, and ſo Laborious in, the Works of GOD, that for many Years together, not one Day has paſs'd them, without a variety of, *Eſſays to do Good;* Yet, Oh! Let their *Laſt Works* be their *Beſt Works.* My Friend, Be ambitious of that Bleſſedneſs; Job. VIII. 7. *Thy Latter End ſhall greatly increaſe.*

I Shall come upon you with ſome *Awakenings.*

Firſt; YOU have this Conſideration to awaken you; your *Laſt Days* are not like to be your *Beſt Days,* in regard of *Temporal Comforts.* No; 'Tis foretold, Eccl. XII. 1. *They will be the Evil Days, and the Years, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them?* I remember indeed, *That GOD bleſſed the Latter End of Job.* Nevertheleſs, the People of GOD often find it ſo, That their *Laſt Days* are in reſpect of Calamity their *Worſt Days.* There is a wiſe Diſpoſal of GOD in it; Thus to *Wean* His Children from the World, before He *Fetch* them from the World. Wonder not if I tell you, The *Evening Wolves* will be upon you.

You'l know what I mean, when their Aſſaults upon you ſhall Interpret it. Oh! What occaſions have Good Men often to ſay, *My Soul is full of Troubles, as my Life draws nigh to the Grave?* Now the *Beſt Thing* that can be done for the Relief of this Evil, is this; Let your *Laſt Works* be your *Beſt Works*. Then will your *Laſt Days* be your *Beſt Days* in regard of *Spiritual Comforts*. No other way to mend your Condition!

Secondly; YOU have this Conſideration to awaken you. *Apoſtacy* will be a Thing of *Dangerous* Conſequence; of *Tremendous* Conſequence. There are ſome who make a ſhow of *Good Works* for a while; but anon they backſlide from all Good Beginnings; they utterly *caſt off the Thing that is Good*; they utterly, totally, finally fall away; Their *Laſt Works* are all *abominable*; They go out in a lothſome *Snuff*. Theſe *Apoſtates* were never any other than *Hypocrites*. They are the *Abhorred of the Lord*; and their *Portion* will be with the *Legions* of *Apoſtates*. But then Godly Men may ſadly *Apoſtatize*. *David*; how did he *Apoſtatize*! *Solomon*, how did he *Apoſtatize*! There is a Laudable Remark ſet on their *Firſt Ways*! —And how did *Aſa* miſcarry, in ſome of his *Laſt Ways*! How does the *End* of the *Year*, bring on the verification of that Word, *The Love of many ſhall wax cold*! GOD will *Recover* ſuch Godly Ones out of their *Declenſions*. But Oh! the Grievous Things that muſt accompliſh or accompany the *Recovery*! That Word

Word is to be trembled at; Prov. XLV. 14. *The Backſlider in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways.*

Thirdly. YOU have this Conſideration to awaken you; *All is well that Ends well.* Children of GOD, Are you not near to *Heaven.* Oh! may your *Laſt Works* be ſuch as may have a notable Savour & Flavour of *Heaven* in them! Such *Laſt Works* as may carry a Symtom and a Foretaſte of *Heaven* in them. Then I am ſure, *All is well.* Chriſtians, Let your *Laſt Works* be your *Beſt Works*, and then what have you to look for? What? But that Invitation of your SAVIOUR, *Well done, Good & Faithful Servant; Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* Oh! with what Joy may you keep looking for the coming of your Lord; who ſays, Rev. XXII. 12. *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work ſhall be.*

AND now, My Hearers, Will you hearken to the Propoſals of PIETY; That you may come at the Inexpreſſible Happineſs, of having your *Laſt Works* to become your *Beſt Works*?

Firſt. THAT your *Laſt Works* may be your *Beſt Works*, your *Firſt Works* muſt be ſeriouſly *Repented* of. Among the *Beſt Works*, are thoſe; Act. XXVI. 20. *Works meet for Repentance.* The *Beſt Men* are they who moſt of all maintain *Repentance to the Laſt.* In your *Latter Days*, Oh! *Reflect* on the Errors of your *Former Days*, And *Repent* of all the Errors. Had your *Firſt Works* been much more praiſe-wor-

thy than they were, yet you might see in them enough and enough to be *Repented* of. But Oh! with what Regrets ought you to keep *Repenting* of it; *Lord, How defective have I been in every Vertue! Lord, How little Good have I done! Lord, How much Time have I spent impertinently! And, Lord, How much have I Lived unto my self; How little unto my GOD?* Let some of your *Last Works* be, To Sing the *Penitentials*.

Secondly. THAT your *Last Works* may be your *Best Works*, Let the Thought of Men in their *Last Hours* be always abiding with you. The Sentiments of *Dying Men*; how Right are they! how Just! how Wise! Oh! come as fast as you can into them; and be not those *Fools*, Amos. 5. 3. *Ye put far away the Evil Day*. Let *Sin* be now as odious to you, as 'tis to a Man in his *Last Hours*; who *mourns at the Last* for having Sinned. Let a *Refuge* for a distressed Soul in a Great SAVIOUR, be as valuable to you as it is to a Man in his *Last Hours*. Let the Disposition of a *New Heart* be of as much value with you, as 'tis to a Man in his *Last Hours*. Let a Life of *Communion* with GOD, be of as much value with you, as it is to a Man in his *Last Hours*. Anticipate, and keep alive, and Live according to, the the Thoughts of your *Last Hours*. This will have a most powerful Tendency, to make your *Last Works* your *Best Works*.

THIS Direction must be prosecuted into some further Operations. Wherefore,

Thirdly,

Thirdly. THAT your *Laſt Works* may be your *Beſt Works*, become very ſenſible of it, That you are Entring into your *Laſt Hours*, and let the ſenſe of it make a mighty Impreſſion upon you. Certainly, it will have a mighty Influence upon your *Laſt Works*, to render them what they ſhould be, if you would feel the power of this Meditation, *My Laſt Hours are now very near me, and I ſee the Shadows of my Evening.* Oh! How powerful a Motive to abound in the *Beſt Works*; have we in that Monitor! 1 Joh. II. 18. *It is the Laſt Time.* Is the *Laſt Time* ſo come upon thee, O Man, and wilt thou not keep Alive the continual Apprehenſion of it? Every *Day* that opens upon thee, may be Entertained with ſuch a *Thought*; *This may be the Laſt Day that I ſhall ſee before the Arreſt of Death be ſerved upon me. This Day may bring me to my Sun-ſet.* Every *Sabbath* may bring this *Thought* with it; *This may be the Laſt Sabbath which I ſhall ſee ſhining on me, before the Labours of my Life are come unto an end.* Every *Supplication* wherein thou doſt bow thy Knee unto the Lord, this *Thought* may inflame it; *This may be the Laſt Time, of my pouring out my Soul unto the Lord, before my Surrendring of my Soul unto the Lord.* Every *Sermon* wherein thou haſt the *Dews of Heaven* falling on thee, this *Thought* may accompany it; *This may be the Laſt Time of my Appearing in the Aſſemblies of Zion.* When we part with our *Friends* at any time, this *Thought* may make us take a very ſerious

Farewell

Farewell of them; *This may be the Laſt Time of my being in this Company.* The Youngeſt of us all, ſhould not think it Unſeaſonable to cheriſh ſuch Thoughts of the *Laſt Time*, to make us *Holy in all manner of Converſation.* How Reaſonably then may ſuch Thoughts have their *daily Energy* upon *Us*, who in the Courſe of Nature, cannot but know, that our *Laſt Hours* are very near unto us?

BUT then, O *Man in thy Declining Age*, there is this *Queſtion* which methinks it ſhould be impoſſible for thee to leave unthought upon. *What wouldſt thou do, if the Summons were certainly brought unto thee, Summoning thee within ONE Month, to appear before GOD the Judge of all?* Oh! what *Repeated Actions* of a Self-loathing and a Self-judging Soul, confeſſing of *Sin*, with a Reſolution *to have no more to do with Idols*! Oh! what *Repeated Reſorts* to the *Fountain ſet open for Sin and Uncleanneſs*, in the *Blood* of thy SAVIOUR? Oh! what *Repeated Reſignation*, unto the *Spirit of Grace*, to Reduce thee and Unite thee unto GOD?---would this *Expectation* compel thee to? And yet, Since thy *Laſt Hours* are ſo near, why ſhouldſt thou be ſhye of ſuch an *Expectation?* And then there is another *Queſtion* akin to This; which one would admire at the ſtupidity that ſhould leave it unthought upon: *If the pulls of the Death-bed were actually now upon thee, What haſt thou left undone, which thou wouldſt now wiſh that it had been done?* Suppoſe thy ſelf within

in a few Minutes of thy Expiration: Suppoſe thy ſelf in all the Solemn Circumſtances of One juſt giving up the Ghoſt: Suppoſe thy *Breath* failing, thy *Throat* ratling, thy *Eyes* with a Cloud, and thy *Hands* with a Sweat upon them, nothing but the *Turn of the Tide* waited for, and thy Soul then to be brought before the Tribunal of GOD. Under the *Illuminations* of ſuch a Suppoſal, ask thy ſelf; *What ſhould I wiſh to have done before I come to This?* Oh! what will be the *Laſt Works* of One, whoſe *Laſt Hours* are ſo Realized unto him? One, who feels his *Laſt Hours* juſt coming upon him, and provides accordingly?

Fourthly; THAT your *Laſt Works* may be your *Beſt Works*, Let that Voice of your SAVIOUR be perpetually ſounding in your Ears, *I know thy Works.* Oh! *Set the Lord always before you*, now you are juſt going to *appear before the Lord.* Let your *Eyes* which are going to be cloſed, be *Ever towards the Lord*; and Ever keep it in your mind, *I am now before the Eyes of the Glorious Lord.* Let your whole *Walk* now towards the cloſe of it, be more than ever, *A Walk before the Lord*: A *Walk* under the perpetual awe of that Word; Job XXIII. 10. *He knows the way that I take.* How well-ordered will be your *Laſt Ways*, if you are perpetually aw'd by this, LORD, *Thou art acquainted with all my Ways!* How well-ordered your *Laſt Words*, if perpetually aw'd by this; LORD, *There is not a Word in my Tongue, but thou knoweſt it!* How well-ordered

dered your *Laſt Thoughts*, if perpetually aw'd by this, LORD, *Thou knoweſt my Thoughts afar off*. What can have a greater Tendency, to *Sanctify us wholly*, and *preſerve* the *whole* of us, even our *Spirit*, and our *Soul* and our *Body Blameleſs*, which it ſhould be the main Intention of our *Laſt Works* to do; ——than This, To be always *as in the Preſence of the Lord*!

Fifthly, and Finally; THAT your *Laſt Works* may be your *Beſt Works*, Let your *Laſt Days*, have more of a Glorious CHRIST ſhining in them than any of your *Former Days*. Acquaint your ſelves more than ever with a Glorious CHRIST, in your *Latter Days*. O you that ſhould be *Fathers* in Chriſtianity, Improve mightily in yout *Knowledge* of *Him that is from the Beginning*, the CHRIST who is the *Ancient of Days* and the *Eternal GOD*. Uſe all the Means of Inſtruction, *following on to know the Lord*, yea, *crying after the Knowledge* of your SAVIOUR, *ſeeking it like Silver, ſearching for it as for hidden Treaſure*; What the Hearts of People in their *Latter Days* are too Naturally and Generally ſet upon. Let every New Diſcovery of a CHRIST unto you, have with you the Reliſh of *Angels Food*. So near *Sun-ſet*, O gaze more than ever on the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*! Let it be a *Pleaſant Thing* unto you, to *Behold* that *Sun*! Accuſtome your ſelves to the *Thoughts* of a Glorious CHRIST: Think on Him, Every Day; Often in a Day; Upon all Occaſions. Be diſpleaſed

pleaſed at your ſelves, if you have been many Hours without ſome Lively *Thoughts* on Him. Cry out, *O my SAVIOUR, I have been too long without thee! I cannot live without thee!* Having been thus, in the *Thoughts of the Lord all the Day long*, at *Night* as an Emblem and an Earneſt of your anon *Sleeping in JESUS*, now let your *Laſt Thoughts* before you fall *Aſleep*, ſtill be on ſomething of your JESUS. And if you *wake in the Night*, Let the *Song of your* SAVIOUR, be *ſtill* with you. Be able to ſay unto your SAVIOUR; LORD, *How precious are thy Thougats unto me! How Great is the Sum of them! when I awake I am ſtill with thee; and I keep Awake by being ſo.* The Subject is Charming, is Copious, is Inexhauſtible. A Glorious CHRIST ſo *Dwelling* in an *Heart*, that is continually *thinking* on Him, will bring a *Marvellous Light* and *Life* into the Soul. *Soul*, A CHRIST in thee, will carry thee bravely thro' the *Valley of the Shadow of Death.* Yea, thou mayſt now Sing, *When I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me.* Oh! what a *Light of GOD* haſt thou now ſhining upon thee, in thy *Latter Days*; the *Light* of an *Eternal Morning*! So ſhall that Prophecy be fulfill'd unto thee, *At Evening time it ſhall be Light!* Certainly, your *Laſt Works* ought to be thoſe of *Manly Chriſtianity.* Now the Character of *Manly Chriſtianity*, is that; Eph. IV. 13. *A Fulneſs of CHRIST.* My Brethren, Let us grow evidently more *Full of* CHRIST, than ever

we

we were in our Lives ; more *Familiar* with Him, and more *Conformed* to Him. 'Twill be a *Token for Good* upon us, That in our *Last Works*, we are getting on, by the *Knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect Man* ; the *Perfection*, which it muſt be the Buſineſs of our *Last Works* to attain unto. Syrs, Gather a *Double Portion* of this *Manna*, as your *Sabbath* is coming on , 'Tis a Bleſſed *Sabbath* that is coming on.

YOU will now allow me to take it for granted, That the Glorious One ſhall ſee you all upon your Knees making this Petition with Fervency, with Agony before Him ; *O my GOD, and my SAVIOUR* ; *Let my Laſt Works be my Beſt Works. Let me finiſh well, and be ſet Faultleſs before the Preſence of thy Glory with Exceeding Joy.* A Glorious GOD ſay, *Amen*, unto it.

Fredericus Imperator, *Percontatus, Quid homini optimum poſſit contingere ?* Reſpondit ; *Bonus ex hac vita Exitus.*

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